

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy

OFFICIAL ORGAN, THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

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ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

NATIONAL HONOR

Let us then so conduct our affairs that those of tomorrow may say:

We have used our powers to protect rights and liberties; we have used our forces to promote justice among men

We have shielded the helpless from aggression; we have dealt fairly with all

We have insured opportunity to every child, and have guarded from hunger and disease

We have grown and prospered without infringing on our neighbors; we have conquered ignorance and greed

We have omitted no word or deed demanded by the welfare of our fellow men; we have shared our abundance for the enrichment of life

TENURE OF POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND TEACHERS

CHARLES B. STILLMAN

President of the American Federation of Teachers

It seems rather startling, but altogether fitting, that the teachers be given a hearing before this congress of women. You have but recently secured partial suffrage, but you may not realize that the enfranchisement of the teachers in any adequate sense of the term is as recent, and on a less secure basis.

I do not know how superintendents as a class might feel at the strange spectacle of the discussion of their tenure by a mere teacher; they have long enjoyed the privilege of speaking for themselves. But, regardless of whether you have selected the right individual or not, the appearance on this morning's program not only of a superintendent and a principal, but of a teacher in the ranks, seems encouraging for the conception of democracy in our schools—and Chicago teachers now welcome all evidence of vitality in the idea of democracy.

On second thought the teacher is best fitted to discuss superintendents' tenure, because the teacher is the first to feel the effects of such tenure or of the lack of it.

To get this before you broadly and authoritatively, let me quote the foremost American authority on public school administration, E. P. Cubberley:

It is primarily his [the superintendent's] business to plan and to lead. At times he must direct, at times he must show backbone in resisting improper plans and people, and occasionally he must put his back against the wall and fight. He ought not to be a pugnacious individual, but he will not be true to the interests he serves if he is not willing to stand firmly for right principles of action in school affairs. A superintendent in a modern city must belong to the vertebrate, and not to the jelly fish class. To enable him to stand by his guns when submission or retreat would be shameful, he needs protection from flank

attacks, so that those who would indirectly beat him down in his efforts to protect the educational interests of the children under his care may be made to fight him in the open and face to face.

The two flank movements usually made by boards of education, in the process of reducing a superintendent to submission, are to attack his tenure of office and his salary. To prevent this, a superintendent of schools, after possibly a trial period of one year, should be elected for certain definite periods and covering a reasonably long time, four or five years are perhaps the most desirable terms, and during such term of office the board of education should not be permitted to dismiss him except for serious cause, and then only by a practically unanimous vote (four-fifths or five-sevenths, for example). Neither should the board be permitted to reduce his salary at all during his term of office. This gives the superintendent freedom from attack along these lines for a certain definite period of time, during which he can plan and carry out a definite educational policy.

No better method for reducing a superintendent to subjection could be devised than an annual re-election. * * *

ILLINOIS BACKWARD

Illinois, in this regard, as in that of teachers' tenure, must be classed among the backward states. Our law recognizes no such official as city superintendent of schools. Any Illinois board of education can follow its own caprice in the creation or abolition of the office. Can you expect a man who faces the annual necessity of lining up a majority of lay board members to ignore that necessity and decide policies on educational grounds alone, when the whip is held over him by powerful interests? A superintendent's responsibility is so great, and his job so difficult at best, that a community has no moral right to subject him to that ordeal.

A board of education of a western city dropped 200 efficient teachers in response

* An Address to the Illinois Woman's Legislative Congress, Chicago, December 29, 1916.

to a wave of religious prejudice, one of those blind, un-American, shameful orgies of hysteria, like a lynching spree, usually engineered by a crafty clique composed of all religions, for their private profit. The superintendent invited the board of education to a dinner—not twenty-one, it was a small board—and locked them in until they had talked out their hysteria, and in the resulting sanity of the small hours the 200 were reinstated. Would the superintendent have done that if his election had been but a few months off? Perhaps, but it would be asking a great deal of human nature, more than any community can successfully demand.

There is the opposite danger, of course, of buttressing an incompetent in office. A good example is the case of Superintendent Fredericks of Cleveland, who not only dropped six competent teachers, but at a time when the revelations of the Cleveland Survey were driving the war from the front page, said contemptuously that he had not bothered to follow it. The board of education asked his resignation, the public clamored for it, but he stood by his contract.

The council recommendation,¹ meets both issues, providing that the superintendent may be elected for a term not to exceed four years, and may be dismissed for inefficiency or neglect of duty, but only after ninety days' notice, and publication of charges and answer if the superintendent desires.

I have given a full half of my time to the superintendents, and cannot be accused of favoritism if I turn to my own group, the teachers. Here Illinois is particularly backward. Massachusetts, Montana, California, Maryland, and in particular, New Jersey and Oregon, provide for teachers' tenure. Last summer I corresponded with the secretaries of the boards of education of twenty-four

of our largest cities, and even where they had no tenure provisions, they insisted they followed the recommendations of the superintendent. Even outside the numerous large cities in states just named, tenure obtains in Buffalo, New Haven, New Orleans, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Providence, and others.

THE UNCERTAIN TENURE OF TEACHERS

Of course, I am a party at interest here. Let me quote Cubberley again:

Compared with employees in other lines of work, the school teacher, under the annual election plan, is not accorded the tenure of position given to street or steam railway employees, general business employees, policemen, firemen, or government clerks. None of these have to apply over and over for positions which they have been filling acceptably, nor run the chance of annual election with its attendant accidents and surprises. So long as these persons render efficient service they retain their places, and when they cease to do so they are first warned, and then perhaps transferred to a less important position, and finally dropped. As a legal fact, every teacher, principal and superintendent is automatically out of a position at the close of every school year, and the burden rests upon them to see that the school board re-employs them, instead of the burden resting upon the school board, as it ought, to dismiss those it does not want to retain, and explain their reasons for doing so.

This condition is in part a tradition from early times, and in part, the result of a board of rapidly changing laymen attempting to exercise professional functions. They have not the professional insight to enable them to see far enough to plan and to carry out a consistent educational policy for the schools; they lack standards for professional competency; they are too subject to pressure, and in their official actions they are usually vacillating and uncertain.

Surely, it is not necessary to dwell on the necessity of freeing the mind of the efficient teacher from worry over her position. She should not be compelled to estimate the expediency of flunking Al-

¹ Recommendations of a committee of the City Council appointed to investigate the organization and administration of the department of education.

derman ——'s son, or reprimanding Politician ——'s daughter, or recommending supplies in competition with those favored by a board member. She should feel that her job depended only on securing results as a teacher, and as a teacher of children and citizens, as well as of subjects and textbooks. That would seem almost axiomatic.

But we need not go outside of Chicago to find it questioned most violently. Some say, "We are willing to let the teachers run their class rooms, if they will let us run the legislature without interference." But the majority of the teachers reply that they would be false to their trust if they did not actively exert their due influence at Springfield, not only on educational matters such as provisions for vocational education, but on humanitarian and all other matters concerning them as citizens.

RESPECT FOR CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY

Respect for constituted authority has been advanced as a necessary requirement in any tenure scheme. The phrase is unfortunate, because it seems to substitute ex-officio respect for earned respect. Respect for constituted authority may easily become a grave danger in a democracy. Judicial procedure, one would think, should be granted the highest respect of all, but when we find, as in the San Francisco bomb case, that a man has been convicted of murder by a professional jury, a jury composed of men who have for years made their living out of jury service thru the kind assistance of public officials, we do not want to let our respect run away with us. Would you have had the youth of Philadelphia taught respect for constituted authority in the days of the Tweed ring? I understand that even Chicago was dominated by "grey wolves" at one time. Would you have the habit of indiscriminating respect for aldermen, as such, inculcated in our children? *Lese majeste* is not a popular charge in America yet, despite Chicago's apparent testimony of last June to the contrary. When constituted authority is guilty of un-American acts, respect for constituted

authority may verge dangerously close to treason.

LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE

Loyalty and obedience have been urged as of co-ordinate importance with efficiency. A non-Federation teacher told me, "the three virtues seem to be efficiency, loyalty and obedience, and the greatest of these is obedience." But to what? Loyalty and obedience to individuals, to official superiors as such, as opposed to loyalty and obedience to principle, is the curse of popular government. It is the basis on which the ward heeler builds a political machine. And it is the basis of very similar and even more disastrous manipulation of our public school system. Flooding a ward with short term appointees is a time honored device for putting over an administration candidate. But how amateurish compared with the Board of Education's thoro-going reform last June of putting the entire educational staff on a twelve-month appointee basis! The efficient development and faithful carrying out of educational policy all down the line, yes! Loyalty, yes, but to the children and citizens of Chicago, rather than to "constituted authority."

MEDIOCRITY ENCOURAGED

But the chief tragedy of the present system is not the personal one of teachers dropped summarily, or even the open door to worse political exploitation of the schools. The present system fails to release the best brains for the service of the schools, and incalculable community waste results. It encourages mediocrity by a very simple method. If a teacher raises his head above the ruck, he is merely offering a likely target. A common response to a request for support of something progressive is, "No. It is a good thing, but I had better keep out of it—I may want a principalship some time." Under such a system it will not take long for the vast bulk of the teachers to learn the folly of having, or at least, of expressing ideas—or, for that matter, long to eliminate the rest.

I cannot close without insisting that too absolute security for either super-

intendent or teacher is a danger. An incompetent teacher should not on legal technicalities be able to impose himself on pupils and fellow teachers. Again the council recommendations meet both issues squarely, providing that after three years of satisfactory service teachers shall be removed only for cause, after a hearing, or for inefficiency or neglect of duty, after opportunity to improve. The decision of the Board on charges of inefficiency or neglect of duty shall be final, but it must be based on the written charges of the superintendent given thirty days in advance, and the written defense of the teacher, both of which shall be

published at the teacher's request.

We are fortunate in having this definite bill to get behind, covering the major defects in our medieval school law. Chicago needs many things from Springfield, but let me submit that she needs nothing more than these conservative tenure provisions for superintendent and teachers. Only then can the energies of this great public spirited body of teachers be freed from back-to-the-wall defense of democracy in our schools, and released for constructive attack on the urgent problems of the reconstruction of our public schools to meet public needs.

THE PENSION PROBLEM

PAUL STUDENSKY

Bureau of Municipal Research, New York City

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IV. THE PARTLY CONTRIBUTORY SYSTEM (CONTINUED)*

In the question of management, the partly contributory systems tend to allow each side equal representation in the managing board, when each side assumes equal responsibility for the continued solvency of the system. Frequently, however, one side or the other contends that it should have the majority. In this case if the fund develops a deficiency, the majority side would be blamed for it, and would receive no coöperation from the other.

A clear distinction between the question of pensions and that of wages is promoted by a partly-contributory system. But in a preliminary discussion, a considerable confusion of the two frequently prevails. The employees oppose an increase of contributions on the ground that it would reduce their wages, whereas the taxpayers protest to an increase of the government's contribution on the ground that it would be equivalent to an increase of wages. Neither of these

arguments can stand a fair test. The employees' contributions could no more be viewed as a reduction of their wage than could any saving which they add to their bank accounts. The analogy is complete, for under a fair retirement system they never forfeit the amount of contributions standing to their credit, and the government pays them no less in wages because they set aside a part of it for their future protection.

It is unfair because the wage involves not only the satisfaction of immediate but also of future wants. It may be said that in some cases the wage provides a mere subsistence, but this would only prove that an adjustment is necessary in their case, that we have not gone far enough in our social reforms, and that we need a minimum wage which is a problem for another movement. Of course the contribution slightly limits one's immediate use of the wage but it does so in order to insure the employer some satisfaction of his wants in the future.

It is, therefore, not a reduction of the wage but a redistribution of it between immediate and future wants. Since under

* A partly contributory system is a retirement system in which the employees and the government jointly contribute. The previous articles have appeared in the Oct., Nov., Dec., and Feb. issues of THE AMERICAN TEACHER.

present economic and social conditions it is immensely difficult for the individuals themselves, to save, a collective effort and a compulsory measure are necessary to assure that a reasonable proportion of the wage is regularly set aside for future protection. Compulsory saving is made more attractive to the public employee by the fact that under certain limitations his savings are doubled by the assistance of the public. This is one of the fundamental principles of modern social philosophy. Against selfish carelessness and prejudice which are behind the argument, it puts forth social regulations and unity of purpose for common good. Neither is the taxpayer's contribution intended as an increase of wages, for he realizes that by coöperation with the employee an *esprit de corps* is developed which compensates him for the expenditure.

Furthermore, the two arguments neutralize each other in a fairly devised partly-contributory system, and both parties ultimately abandon them as unfair. Satisfied that they contribute to a mutual proposition and knowing exactly what each side pays, they do not try as they always do under a wholly or non-contributory system (as previously described) as soon as the system is established to shift their contributions upon the other. The fact that the partly-contributory system is not drawn into the vicious circle which forces abandonment of the other systems, is, perhaps, one of the greatest advantages. Experience abroad tends to show that in all sound and equitable systems of the partly-contributory type, both parties are no longer regarding retirement benefits as a "deferred pay," but as a joint undertaking. As this type of system spreads all over the world, the "deferred pay" principle becomes as obsolete as the "reward" idea.

The cost of a retirement system established upon a sound actuarial basis, as the investigation of the foreign systems and of the Massachusetts teachers' systems shows, amounts according to the liberality of benefits to ten, and even

twelve per cent of salaries. Neither the government nor the employees alone are willing to bear this expense. The partly-contributory system solves the problem by dividing the cost and presents, therefore, the great advantage of making possible the establishment of a financially sound system. The shares of cost which the employees and the government in these systems bear each amount to about 5 or 6 per cent. The employees in this country, accustomed to pay only 1 or 2 per cent to the old and unsound systems which are now becoming exhausted believe that they cannot afford to pay such high rates. The most common argument in any human activity is undoubtedly the one which begins with an assertion that it is impossible. We know, of course, that 99 per cent of these impossibilities are only imaginary, as for instance, the belief when the subway was built, that it would not prove a success. It is also shown when a class of schoolboys having a difficult problem assigned to them by a teacher protest that they will be unable to do it. These contentions can be met by showing what others in similar circumstances have done and by inducing them to try it. As the teachers in Massachusetts pay 5 per cent, those in Russia and Italy 6 per cent, and in Liverpool, from 4 to 8 per cent, etc., and the teachers and other employees in London and other places, as high as 12 per cent,^{*} our employees, who do not receive any smaller salaries than these others should be able to pay 5 or 6 per cent.

Accusations and counter-accusations regarding the sufficiency or insufficiency of salary, the good faith of government or employee, the responsibility for past negligence, the proportion of benefit to each party may promote wider interest in the whole question; but there is rather too much danger that the bitterness engendered may defeat the whole propa-

^{*}In New Zealand the teachers, police, railway and other employees contribute from 5 to 10 per cent., and in London the teachers contribute from 5 to 12 per cent.

ganda, or at the very least limit the value of the plan adopted.

Two more arguments deserve attention. The first is that the employees sometimes claim that a system based upon the principle of cooperative division of cost should be adopted only for new entrants, and that the old system be continued for present employees in view of their "vested rights." It is a common occurrence when a change of an old social status is proposed that its present beneficiaries advance a claim that it should be preserved for them and that the reform should be applied only to the next generation. In the question of pensions as well as in any other question of great importance, the public would do well to deny these claims. It wants to have uprooted immediately a vicious system, which threatens its beneficiaries as well as the public, and it expects the beneficiaries to cooperate in the matter. Thus, in every country abroad, as soon as the dangers of the old pension systems appeared, the legislatures have refused the employees' claim that it is obliged to maintain the old systems, but have changed them in accordance with new principles. No privileges in this respect are justified.

The second is the question of moral obligations, which is much discussed, denied, emphasized. Of course there are moral obligations between the government and the employees. Unfortunately each side is inclined to recognize only the peculiar local responsibilities of the other to the exclusion of its own responsibilities and of the greater issues. The employees are a part of the public. They must look upon the pension question not only from a professional but also from a public point of view. This is the tendency of the social evolution and the pension movement must proceed in harmony with it. When the very keen appreciation which each party has of the moral obligations of the other becomes associated in their mind with the recognition of their own moral obligations, a new conception of mutual responsibility

will make for a greater democracy and a happier community.

In the question of management, the partly contributory systems tend to allow each side equal representation in the managing board, when each side assumes equal responsibility for the continued solvency of the system. Frequently, however, one side or the other contends that it should have the majority. In this case if the fund develops a deficiency, the majority side would be blamed for it and would receive no cooperation from the other.

V. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The following are in brief the conclusions of the writer with regard to the three types of system discussed:

I—THE WHOLLY CONTRIBUTORY SYSTEM

1. It embodies no public purpose, for it is usually established by the employees as their private association for their own benefit. The employees manage it themselves while the government and the public have little interest in the matter.

2. In the course of time the measure proves unfair to the employees and inadequate for the government and leads to considerable bitterness. The employees realize that the pension is of benefit not only to them but also to the public and they consider it unfair that they alone should contribute. Frequently, too, they take an extreme viewpoint that it does not benefit them but benefits only the public and that they should be absolved, therefore, from contributing. The government realizes that the system could more adequately benefit the public if it were reorganized and managed partly or entirely with that purpose in view. As a result of the movement either a subsidy is granted or employees' contributions are altogether abolished, the government assuming the entire cost. At the same time the government takes either part or the entire management out of the hands of employees. Thus the

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THE FLUOROSCOPE

It is only the cynic who considers the fluoroscope an instrument for the discovery of defects in our fellow men. It is true that this instrument, like many others used in science, is applied very largely in the search for morbid conditions. But like other instruments of research it may also be used to good effect for revealing healthy and normal conditions. The following contribution is a welcome relief from the enforced examination of pathological specimens. It should convince skeptics and doubters that *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*, in its survey of school conditions, proceeds with scientific objectivity.

IV

HE owes his position as principal neither to pull nor to the cramming process of a superintendent's coaching class. He did not try to curry favor by slavishly worshipping the machine, nor has he made an awe-inspiring "contribution" to educational psychology that would burden the dormant shelves of a university library.

He owes his position to achievement, the kind of achievement that will help make teaching a profession. His efforts as a teacher were not concentrated in the ruling of red ink lines in this year's copy of last year's plan book. His efforts went rather into making the work alive to the boys and girls, and consequently the pupils and the teacher were alive. In his classrooms there was no trace of the bored, tired, disinterested atmosphere that usually strikes the observer of the average classroom. He had a wholesome faith in the worthwhileness of what he was doing and a realization of how much more could be done with our young, if some life was breathed into the lifeless system controlling the schools. As the pupils responded willingly and joyously to the recognition that they were more than merely so many pupils to be managed for five hours a day, so he felt that the educational system would benefit im-

mensely thru the recognition of teachers as being more than cogs.

As a teacher, he had felt the desire to be consulted in matters concerning the school instead of being told, "You are hereby ordered, etc." It seemed wrong to him that on the annual renewal blank, "the ability to obey and carry out orders" should head the list of the necessary qualifications of a good teacher. The wastefulness of the system that refused to make use of the experience of the teachers impressed him deeply. He could not help but realize how teacher after teacher coming to school with zest and enthusiasm, in a few years was saying, "What's the use?" and settling down to a dull, monotonous grind, enlivened occasionally by an extra dose of clerical work or the officious "snooping" of a supervisor. But he had an abiding faith in his fellow teachers. He realized the possibilities and the ideas that lay dormant—dormant because that is how they best suited superiors.

A few years later finds him a principal of a small school. According to all rules, he should now have acquired the psychology of a worshipper of the system. He should have piled up work for the teachers so as to be able to boast of "his" school. He should have become domineering, officious, and all-sufficient. He should have frowned severely when any teacher timidly offered some suggestion.

Strange tho it may be, none of these things happened. He still believed that every teacher should be consulted—that there was something he could learn from everyone in the school, including the pupil, that in the process he would benefit not only himself but what is even more important, the children and the teachers would benefit.

To bridge the gap between principal and teachers was not an easy task, however. "Miss Smith, what do you think of the advisability of changing the practise of ——?" he would ask a teacher, concerning something that was usually

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A MODERN SCHOOL

THE GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD has organized under the corporation of Teachers College, New York City, a school in which certain ideas of educational values will be subjected to the test of experience.

Owing to the fact that the money for the support of this experiment in education is to come from the endowment made by the great oil baron, there has developed considerable public interest in the project. Not so much interest has been shown in the educational conditions which seemed to the Education Board to make intelligent experimentation necessary. It is an important fact that the Rockefeller millions may possibly be used to build up an institution that will prove to be a rival to the public school; but in the general estimation it is a negligible point that the public school has failed in large measure to perform its potential social functions as an institution.

Along with the unintelligent interest in the new educational venture there has developed much opposition to it from two important sources. The first of these is that group of antiquarians on whom rests the responsibility for the maintenance of "culture" as such. This group finds a distinct menace in the program's challenge to the study of the classics. Nothing could be clearer: culture as portrayed by the ancients, and as maintained by their modern supporters, is threatened by this experiment. The classicists are against the modern school; they do not want to see it tried, and therefore they freely predict its failure.

The other group condemns the experiment because it is supported by Rockefeller money. The inference to a certain extent is the old one that no good thing can come from the employment of funds that have been ground from the back of enslaved men, or stolen from less skilful thieves—in a word, "tainted money." But in the main the opposition is deeper than that. Many good citizens firmly believe that a conspiracy has been set on foot by unscrupulous wealth to obtain control of the *ideas* of the nation, as it

has really obtained control of our economic resources. So conservative a statesman as Senator Chamberlain of Oregon, in condemning the official connection of many Rockefeller-paid educational experts with the United States Bureau of Education, expressed the opinion that in two generations the idealism of the entire country could be changed thru the agency of officials in these dominating positions.

In reality, there seems to be scant probability that an exact inquiry into the motives of the money kings avocationally interested in education would reveal substantial evidence of a conspiracy. They are simple-minded folk in the main, outside their chief department of craftiness. In all likelihood they consider themselves sincere public benefactors, endeavoring to correct some of the sad conditions "that man is heir to." They may even imagine that the evils of society are due to the inefficiency, shiftlessness, and the mental defectiveness of the common ruck of men. Their money then could serve a useful purpose in educating men to be more productive and efficient, and incidentally, might draw all men to their benefactors in Christian brotherhood.

There is, however, some ground for concern in the control of educational experiments as well as in the endowment of educational institutions, by the owners of great wealth. Regardless of motives, there is maintained by the wealthy a certain attitude toward social institutions which makes them regard themselves as senior partners in the public's business, and thus as the bearers of the major responsibilities. Perhaps the large cash payment of taxes gives wealth this point of view. In any event the point of view constitutes a menace to the independence of the social institution under subsidy. To a person sensitive to the need of social independence of our semi-public institutions there comes a positive feeling that for example, the Teachers College of Columbia University, by accepting the relation of sponsor to the new experimental school, is submitting

itself to an influence that stands for proprietorship, for an unconsciously selfish, and probably non-social point of view.

For the very insidious nature of the ownership of the experimental school movement there is but one satisfactory cure. That cure is public ownership. The public schools themselves must do their own experimenting. If they will not, then, as we have intimated many times before, let the public demand a new deal of schoolmasters, along with a new deal of idealism.

CO-OPERATION AND PATRIOTISM

At no time in the history of this nation has there been greater need for whole-hearted devotion to the common weal; at no time has there been greater need for sincere coöperation. Yet the men of power and of loud voice are clamoring for blind obedience and unquestioning submission to authority; they are stirring up jingoism and hysteria and hatred.

It is these men of power and of loud voice who are in large measure responsible for the failure of our schools to develop the capacity for coöperation and genuine devotion to the public welfare. They and their representatives have in the first place applied to the management of public education the same selfish and shortsighted methods that they have used with such disastrous results in the management of "private" business. They have hired teachers as long-shoremen are hired, and have treated them as office boys are treated. And they have added insult to injury by flattering the teachers with the name of "profession" when the latter stirred about uneasily in search of some relief.

In spite of underpayment and in spite of shabby treatment, the managers have managed to capture considerable numbers of able and self-respecting men and women. And with these they have trifled. After years of devotion to their re-

spective communities these men and women, depending upon those higher up to look after justice and recognition and rewards, find themselves exposed to the humiliation of begging for well-deserved advancement in power and emolument—or to the humiliation of seeing others, no more able, advanced over them.

After years of such management, whereby advancement is assured to the politic selfseekers, and whereby unselfish devotion and unostentatious ability are systematically ignored, we affect astonishment at the absence of "coöperation"—we cannot understand why the most capable men and women in the teaching business become insurgent instead of becoming enthusiastic about their "superiors" and about the "system."

You can have coöperation only when men and women are given the opportunity to work for a common and approved purpose, with fellow workers whom they can respect and under conditions that permit them to respect themselves. It is possible otherwise to get complex tasks accomplished, it is possible to parcel out details with orders to be followed—but that is not coöperation. You can have patriotism and devotion when men and women feel themselves parts of a whole that has meaning to them in terms of life's values. You cannot in this country expect people with some training and some thinking capacity to grow enthusiastic about symbols that are used to confuse the masses and to distract them from the corruption and exploitation and brutal tyranny which they are obliged to suffer.

Never before has this country needed so much devotion to the public weal: whatever the teachers of America may contribute to the meeting of this need they will contribute in spite of the examples and the principles of those under whose authority they have been obliged to work. Never before has this country needed so much of sincere coöperation: whatever the teachers of America contribute to the meeting of this need they

will contribute in spite of the practise and the ideals of those under whose domination we have in the past built up our systems of management and control.

THE MAYOR, MILITARISM AND DEMOCRACY

The necessity of reorganizing the method of selecting members of the Board of Education so long painfully evident, was never more strongly demonstrated than in the recent appointments to the Board made by Mayor Mitchel. To shape the educational policies of a system embracing some eight hundred thousand children, one might suppose that a necessary qualification for membership in the Board of Education would be a strong sense of social responsibility and a recognition of America's need for fully developed, thinking boys and girls. An examination of the facts discloses that the *sine qua non* in the Mayor's mind, however, is an acquiescence in his desire to extend the "Gary system" and to force military training upon the children in the schools.

Only a short while ago, when the agitation for the adoption of the Gary System first began, we were assured that this system would not only put life into our dead course of study, but would also enable the child to develop his individuality to the utmost instead of being forced to fit into some uniform fashioned in the days of the framers of the Constitution. Our mayor is just as insistent as ever about the Gary system, this developer of individuality and democracy.

But in the meantime, "Preparedness" has become popular. The huge mass of capital accumulating in the United States must be invested abroad and protected. We must train our youth to do this protecting effectively when necessary. Our mayor has become a firm advocate of "Preparedness" but not against the arch enemies,

Ignorance, Low Wages, and Disease. Now no lawyer, corporation director, nor contractor is any longer fit to be a member of the honorable Board in the Mayor's opinion, who does not also believe in the efficacy and necessity of military training. Has it ever occurred to our mayor to question how the democracy that the Gary system is to develop can possibly harmonize with military training? Does he not remember that to produce efficiently trained soldiers, we must in the judgment of New York's great warrior, General O'Ryan, destroy all initiative and produce mere automata?

Our foremost educators, among them Professors Dewey, David Starr Jordan, Dudley F. Sargent, also the Department of Superintendents of the National Education Association, and the Board of Regents of the University of New York State and even the Massachusetts Military Commission, whose convictions concerning the wisdom and value of military training are not determined by political factors, are firmly of the opinion that military training for school children is wrong in principle and theory, that it will work to defeat the very object for which it is created and will greatly hinder the growth of individuality, self-reliance and democracy, without which our entire educational system is bound to be a failure.

In spite of this, our mayor arrogates to himself the right to decide that military training shall be immediately introduced into our schools.

In answer to a delegation of one hundred and fifty prominent workers for social betterment who called upon the Mayor to protest against forcing military training upon the schools, he stated, "I understand the point to be made that there is no value in military training from the educational point of view; that on the contrary, it is harmful from the educational point of view. Now, it is my conviction that military training is one of the most essential elements of general

public education in the United States for the upbuilding of good citizenship. It is my belief that the most conspicuous lack in American youth of today is a recognition of authority, a respect for authority and that that is one of the things that ought to be instilled into American youth."

Is not the time indeed rotten ripe for a change, for a complete reorganization of the method of selecting members of the Board of Education?

* * *

At the Kansas City meeting, the Department of Superintendents of the N E A adopted resolutions disapproving military training in the public schools. These resolutions were based on the report of a committee appointed a year ago to study this problem.

The report reviews the various plans that have been suggested. It points out that none of the great military nations requires military training of boys and that both the Massachusetts and New Jersey Military commissions have condemned such training. The committee concludes that it is impossible for school boys "to perform satisfactorily the arduous work of training," considering the important life changes they are undergoing. "It is an educational and moral offense to snatch them from the natural life of boyhood, and place them in what ought to be a man's job." Military training in the schools is "not only useless and unnecessary but seriously detrimental to the welfare of the pupils and to the community." The New York State Military Training Law is condemned unhesitatingly, "primarily for educational reasons but also because of the pretense which prompts it."

At this time when most people have gone war-mad, and many of our college presidents are attempting to turn the colleges into barracks, it is refreshing indeed to have this group of superintendents take such a bold and straight-forward stand, and refuse to be swept away by military hysteria.

THE FLUOROSCOPE

(Continued from page 40)

done. Invariably came, "Just as you say, Mr. X, I am sure it will suit me." Long years of desuetude had produced a remarkable similarity in the reaction of so many different minds. "But what do you think?" he would repeat. Then came the response and usually a sensible one for it was the expression of the teacher's experience. The response to this new treatment—the treatment of teachers as fellow workers was rapid and wholesome. Suggestions, ideas, plans came without the urging that had been necessary at first. A teachers' council was then organized to provide an orderly and systematic medium for coöperation between principal and teachers. A little later the council practically took the place of the regular conferences—"conferences" that usually serve no other purpose than to provide suitable background and scenery for the principal's performances.

The teachers soon demonstrated that it was quite possible to do effective and efficient work without tying up each package of written work with red twine and indicating on the top sheet the life history of its production. Tests for the edification and amusement of the head of department (for what other purpose can they serve than to kill time for the pupil and consume the energy of the teachers?) were materially minimized. The interest in the work increased. High school teachers soon were saying, "Of course, these boys do splendid work; they come from Mr. X's school." The vim and enthusiasm that the teachers had brought with them in their youth was beginning to return. Teaching was not exactly the boring, monotonous task it had been. Each one felt a live, personal interest in his work, for the instinct of workmanship was given free scope. It was not stifled or deadened with unnecessary, devitalizing routine. Our principal, however, feels strongly that a school must be efficiently managed not for the glory of the principal, but be-

cause then only will the school best render that useful service which is its only excuse for existing.

Mr. X considers himself *primus inter pares* and so would hardly fit into the military ideal that many would like our schools to ape—with the principal as general and the teachers as privates, and with the pupils as the enemy.

The Pension Problem

(Continued from page 39)

system changes to a partly or non-contributory basis.

3. The abandonment of wholly contributory systems is accelerated by the fact that the employees always fix their contributions so low that the fund breaks down after a few years of operation.

4. If their contributions were high they would lead to an increase of salaries, thereby shifting a part of the employees' pension burden upon the taxpayers in another form.

5. It affords no basis for the establishment of a sound actuarial system because the cost of benefits, especially at higher ages, would be absolutely impossible for the employees alone to bear.

II.—THE NON-CONTRIBUTORY SYSTEM

1. It is autocratic, more or less discretionary with the higher officials and dangerous therefore to the independence of employees. It is established by the employer for the purpose of gaining a greater control over the efficiency of the service by retiring the superannuated and by threatening the active members of the force with forfeiture of all pension rights in case of their dismissal or resignation. It regards the employee merely as a machine and ignores his needs and desires. It gives him no voice in the management of the system.

2. It is inequitable between the older and younger employees. It focuses the attention upon the immediate retirement of the aged members. Its natural tendency is to provide no benefits for

the contingencies which threaten the younger employee, such as early disability, early death, resignation and dismissal, but to provide increased benefits to the fortunate ones who remain in the service until old age.

3. As the pension disbursements increase they depress the wages of the younger employees, with a result that the pension becomes a "deferred pay" and the system contributory under disguise in a most inequitable form. The younger generation pays for the benefits of the older and no one knows how much he pays.

4. It absolves a large group of employees from any obligation to save. This is harmful to the individual employee as well as the society at large. It meets the condemnation of the public which promotes voluntary and compulsory savings and it is eventually substituted by a contributory system.

5. It becomes too costly for the government. The latter is forced to request the employees to contribute and changes it to a partly contributory basis. The change involves much greater complications than would have taken place had that basis been adopted from the beginning. It has been abandoned almost everywhere abroad and must be abandoned in this country.

6. Its basis is ill adapted to the establishment of a sound actuarial system which involves the building of a reserve, because the cost of such a system would be too great from the very outset for the government alone to bear.

7. Its exclusive application to a certain group of, or to all, public employees affords an argument against the establishment of contributory systems for all other wage earners. It blocks, therefore, the spreading of the social insurance movement.

III.—THE PARTLY-CONTRIBUTORY SYSTEM.

1. It is a compromise between the foregoing two extreme systems.

2. It harmoniously combines with social insurance and with its principle that every worker must participate in the cost of his protection.

3. It is a joint undertaking which involves mutual benefits and a two-fold purpose—on the one hand, insuring the employees and their dependents against want in old age, disability, death and—to some extent—resignation and dismissal; on the other hand, facilitating the elimination of the inefficient from the service and promoting an *esprit de corps*.

4. It tends to give both sides an equal voice in management.

5. It promotes a clear distinction between pension and wages, each side knowing what it pays; it is not intended either to reduce or increase the wages, does not depress the wage and does not become a "deferred pay."

6. It makes possible the establishment of a financially sound system the cost of which amounts to 10 or 11 per cent or even more, by dividing the cost and requiring the employees to pay 5 or 6 per cent, as is being done all over the world.

7. Concurrently with its adoption for both present employees and new entrants, the old "vested rights" and privileges are being swept away.

8. It is a system which progresses in harmony with social evolution while the other systems are dying, and it expresses the growing mutual responsibilities which make for a greater democracy and a happier community.

SNOBOCRACY IN EDUCATION

A principal was invited to the monthly conference of one of the departments. This department holds its monthly conferences in a restaurant near the school. The principal's reply to the invitation was:

"I do not care to meet the teachers of this school, except in our official relations."

TEACHER, KNOW THYSELF

In the course of an experiment in self-rating, conducted by the principal and teachers of Public School 165, Brooklyn, the teachers accepted unanimously the following criteria of an "A" teacher:

1. The teacher who is "A" in instruction:

- a Has scholarship
- b Prepares his work thoroly
- c Drills thoroly
- d "Gets it over"
- e Interests the pupils
- f Gets the pupils to do as much of the work as possible
- g Provides for the exceptional pupil

2. The teacher who is "A" in discipline:

- a Has sympathy and patience
- b Has self-control and poise
- c Brings out the best in his pupils
- d Develops self-control on the part of the pupils
- e Develops in the pupils proper habits of action, both in and out of the classroom

There has been much complaint about various systems of supervision and rating—many of the complaints quite just. But until teachers are prepared to develop a machinery that will eliminate the inefficient and stimulate the competent but uninspired laggards, the complaints will be of no avail. Here is one of many beginnings in the right direction. Can you add to it? It is not perfect; can you suggest im-

provements? This is our problem and no one will solve it if we do not ourselves.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE elementary teachers of Washington are asking for a salary increase because there, too, the cost of living has jumped so high that their present salaries are inadequate for maintaining an efficient or proper standard of living. Of the 1,888 teachers in Washington, 1,098 are elementary teachers. The minimum salary is \$600; the maximum, \$1,350. The average salary is \$798. Of the 1,098 elementary teachers, 542 receive \$750 or less, and it takes the average teacher from 20 to 30 years to reach the maximum.

And yet, a bulletin of the U. S. Bureau of Education states that teachers are expected to live on a much better scale than other workers, and shows that it takes at least \$800 a year for normal expenses, excluding bills for insurance, illness, etc.

According to the report of Secretary Redfield, the cost of living increased 34 per cent. in 1916. More specifically, the purchasing power of the dollar of 1915 was equivalent to 66 cents in 1916. In terms of teachers' salaries, these figures show that the \$800 salary of the teacher in 1915 has a purchasing power of only \$547.80 in 1916.

In view of these graphic facts, the case of the Washington teacher speaks for itself very eloquently.

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A CODE OF ETHICS

- EVERY teacher should be adequately prepared both in scholarship and professional training, that he may invigorate life thru knowledge and make constant progressive adjustments to changing needs.
- EVERY teacher should affiliate himself with and give active support to the organized body of his profession in the community in which he resides. . . . and these associations should be instruments for the cultivation of fellowship, for the exchange of professional experience, for the advancement of teaching, and the welfare of the public schools.
- THE collective knowledge and experience of the profession should be made available to all.
- TEACHERS, as an organized body of professional workers, by their united influence, thru organized and persistent effort, should use every legitimate means to secure for their members all the material conditions necessary to the highest efficiency.
- IN case of a conflict of educational ideals between teachers and school boards, the teachers should recognize the fact that the school committee must direct the general policy of the schools; that it is also the duty of the teachers as a body to protest against any violation of their professional ideals, to state their reasons to the school board, and, if need be, to the community.
- TEACHERS should constantly familiarize themselves with the profession's recognized and authoritative literature. Perpetual growth must be maintained and professional stagnation eliminated.
- EVERY teacher should regard every other teacher as entitled to all the rights, courtesies, and emoluments that usually obtain in this and all other professions. Professional efficiency, morals, and personality should be the sole standard for employment, assignment, promotion, demotion, and dismissal of teachers.
- IT is unprofessional for teachers seeking employment to accept the assistance of book agents or publishers of school books, thereby giving grounds for the suspicion of obligations tending to influence the purchase or adoption of books or supplies in favor of any particular agent or firm.
- TEACHERS should not resign during the period for which they have been engaged, but the public good demands that a call to a larger or more congenial service is a public and personal right which should not be denied a teacher after due notice has been given.
- TEACHERS are the servants of the people, without regard to distinctions of political party, religious faith, or other matters upon which individuals honestly disagree. Teachers are fully entitled to liberty of conscience.
- TEACHERS should so conduct themselves that no just reproach may be brought against them.
- TEACHERS should always maintain a progressive conservatism of thought and action, dignity of character, honesty of purpose, and they should take an unqualified stand for the best in education and in social life.

(From Report of Committee, Massachusetts Federation of Teachers Associations)